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The Wild Rose

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BOOK OF WORDS

FISCHER EDITION
No. 3910

The Wild Rose

Book by
EDITH M. BURROWS

Music by
W. RHYS-HERBERT

OPERETTA

for

LADIES' VOICES

In Two Acts

.75 net

J. FISCHER & BRO. NEW YORK
7, 8, 10 and 11, Bible House (Astor Place)

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ARGUMENT

Rose McCloud, the most popular young society belle of her time, is bored with her artificial existence. An endless round of festivities and a maddening procession of adoring debutantes, newspaper interviewers, charity and reform leaders seeking her financial support, dressmakers, milliners, etc., etc., drive her to distraction. Having achieved great success in society theatricals, she decides to go on the stage, and is desirous of obtaining the leading rôle in a play by Lady Grey—an eccentric woman playwright. Much to her amazement and disappointment, Lady Grey flatly refuses to consider her for the part, and will not even grant her an interview, thinking her far too frivolous for the work. In utter disgust she decides to leave the city surroundings, which have become so hateful and go to the country under an assumed name.

The second act takes place at her country establishment, where thoroughly enjoying the simple life, she succeeds in outwitting an uninvited and undesired throng of city admirers, who have tracked her to her country home, and come to pay her adulation. Meanwhile she makes friends with a nice old country lady, who lives next door and who turns out to be Lady Grey. When the latter discovers the true identity of Rose, she promises her the desired rôle in the play, and all ends happily.

SCENES

Act I. A formal drawing room in Rose McCloud's city home.
Act II. A garden on Rose McCloud's country estate.

TIME

The present. One month elapses between the acts.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Rose McCloud (Soprano) ..... A Popular Young Society Belle
Mary Forsythe* ..... Her Secretary and Friend
Mrs. Fussy* ..... Her Housekeeper
Lady Grey* ..... An Eccentric Playwright
Miss Writemup } (Mezzo-Sopranos) ..... Reporters
Miss Putemdown }
Dora, Flora } (Sopranos and Mezzo-Sopranos or Altos) ..... Debutantes
Molly, Polly }
Miss Talkalot (Soprano) ..... A Suffragette
Mrs. Doingood (Alto) ..... A Charity Worker
Madame Sewseams* ..... A Dressmaker
Madame Feathertop* ..... A Milliner
Madame Smellsweet* ..... A Perfumer
Bobbie (Mezzo-Soprano) ..... The Buttons
(To be impersonated by a girl)
Maids ..... Twelve Girls

A Cat
Chorus (ad lib.)
City and Country People

*No solos allotted. Can assist in the choruses.

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THE WILD ROSE

EDITH BURROWS W. RHYS-HERBERT

ACT I.

The curtain rises, disclosing an informal reception room in Rose McCloud's city home. The furniture should be light—preferably willow—and the window draperies, pillow covers, hangings, etc., should be rose-figured cretonne. The predominating tone of the room should be rose color, and this is further accentuated by the great masses of roses, which the maids place in vases about the room after their opening chorus.

Center back are casement windows, lightly curtained in white and hung with rose-figured cretonne; to the left, up stage, is a wide entrance doorway, also hung with cretonne; left, down stage, a tea table with bowl of roses; and center front of stage is kept free for choruses and dances, but directly back of this open space is a large table, having on it books, magazines, lamp with rose shade, and a very large bowl of roses; right, down stage, is a fireplace, and the mantel over this bears two vases of roses; right, up stage, a small table with more roses. Very near the fireplace is a large easy willow chair with cretonne pillows and cretonne upholstered footstool. Other willow chairs with pillows are near the tea-table. Center table and small table right, up stage.

The twelve maids enter, wearing the conventional French maid costumes—black dresses, small white aprons, and dainty caps, and carrying rose-covered florists' boxes, which they open during the first part of their song.

More vases can be reserved for roses.

1. OVERTURE—INSTRUMENTAL.

2. "THERE'S SOMETHING IN THIS HOUSE AWRY."

MAIDS (*Opening boxes*)—

There's something in this house awry,
And that is why we all must try
To be cheery and not dreary,
In the trying never weary;
For—we'll whisper it to you—
The secret is, our Rose is blue!

(*They have taken the roses from the boxes during this song, and now, holding them in their arms, they come to the center front, and step to the music of the following:*)

All the day
She mopes away,
Her life in endless sighing.
When night falls
Then sadness calls,
We find her crying.
She is pretty,
Also witty,
Yet she still is sad.
She has health
And great wealth.
Surely 'tis too bad!

There's something in this house awry, etc.

(*As they sing their last line, Bobbie, in the dress of a "Buttons," enters, and puts his finger warningly to his lips.*)

3. "ON THE JOB, ALL OF YOU."

BOBBIE AND MAIDS—
BOBBIE—

1. Ssh! On the job, all of you,
And be quick about it, too;
She is coming—you know who,
And you know what she will do
If you're shirking.

(The maids scamper hurriedly to their tasks of putting the roses in the empty bowls and vases on tables and mantel, leaving Bobbie the center of the stage. He folds his arms in a lordly way, and goes on with his song.)

2. Say, I put it up to you,
Go ahead and tell me who
Was the girl you said was blue?
Come on now and answer true,
While you're working.

(The maids having put the roses in water, now crowd around Bobbie in center of stage.)

MAIDS *(Softly)*—

There's something in this house awry,
And that is why we all must try
To be cheery and not dreary,
In the trying never weary;
For—we'll whisper it to you—
The secret is, our Rose is blue!

(Mrs. Fussy, the housekeeper, stout and irritable, dressed in stiff black, and carrying a huge bunch of keys, has entered unobserved, and has overheard the last two lines. She now jingles her keys, and the maids and Bobbie jump guiltily.)

MRS. FUSSY *(Speaking)*—

I should think she would be blue
With such servants here as you!

(Taking Bobbie by the ear)

Off with you, young man, to work,
See that you no longer shirk!

(She pushes him off stage and then turns to maids.)

"The secret is, our Rose is blue!"
Your mistress is not "Rose" to you!

4. "BUT WE LOVE HER AND ADORE HER."

MAIDS *(Protesting)*—

But we love her and adore her,
To be gay we would implore her.
She's the dearest flower that grows,
And she'll always be our "Rose."

(As they sing the last line, they point toward the doorway through which Rose enters. She is dressed in a rose-colored gown, wears a hat trimmed with many roses, and carries a rose-colored parasol. She moves languidly toward the center of the stage, and the maids take their places on either side of her, and remain there during the next song. While Rose is crossing the stage the maids speak the following lines:)

FIRST MAID—She's here, she's here!

SECOND MAID—Our Rose so dear!

5. "I'M A ROSE THAT BLOOMS IN A HOTHOUSE."

ROSE AND CHORUS—

ROSE—

1. I'm a Rose that blooms in a hothouse,
In an artificial way;
And instead of fair golden sunshine,
Electricity's my day.
For it's up in the morning early
Into the hands of my maid,
Then it's shopping to do or business,
And stupid calls to be paid.

I really can't stand it
One minute more.
This life is becoming
A deadly bore.

CHORUS—

She really can't stand it, etc.

ROSE—

2. Then luncheons and afternoon parties,
Cards, theatres, or a tea,
With dinners and balls in the evening;
'Twill soon be the death of me.
The excitements are even palling;
I'm bored by my limousine,
And gone are the thrills I once had
When in a flying machine.
I really can't stand it, etc.

CHORUS—

She really can't stand it, etc.

(*The debutantes enter with an eager, youthful rush, carrying flowers, candy, books and parcels, which they later give to Rose. They wear girlish gowns of light colors and large hats. They speak the following lines:*)

DORA—

Rosie, you look so sweet to-day.

FLORA—

You are the very spirit of May.

MOLLY—

Isn't your gown just perfectly stunning!

POLLY—

Yes—and your hat—oh, that's too cunning.

6. THE ADORING DEBUTANTES.

DORA—

1. Rosie, I bring you some candy,

FLORA—

And I have some flowers gay,
(*They give their presents to Rose.*)

DORA—

Lunch with me, Rosie, tomorrow?

FLORA—

Go with me, please, to the play?

THE FOUR DEBUTANTES—

For we are debutantes so gay;
With joy and with spirit we bring
The gifts, that our hearts give away,
To our Rose, to our queen, we sing.

MOLLY—

2. Rosie, these books may be handy.

POLLY—

O, think of me when I'm away.
(*They give books and presents to Rose.*)

MOLLY—

Rose, dear, with me come motoring?

POLLY—

Walk with me, won't you, today?

THE FOUR DEBUTANTES—

For we are debutantes so gay, etc.

ROSE—Thank you for your presents, my dears, and for your jolly invitations, but I'm sure I haven't a minute to call my own for weeks ahead!

(*Rose gives flowers, candy, books and parcels to the maids. Enter Mary; she carries a notebook, which she frequently consults. Her costume is a simple white one.*)

MARY (*Speaking*)—

Good-morning everybody!
This is our busy day.

(*To maids*)—

Come, off with you to duties,
You have no time to play.

MRS. FUSSY—

That's what I told them.
Now I *shall* scold them!

(*Exeunt Mrs. Fussy and maids, the former shaking her head and the latter throwing kisses to Rose as they go out. She waves to them.*)

MAIDS (*Softly singing as they go*)—

For we love her and adore her,
To be gay we would implore her.
She's the dearest flower that grows,
And she'll always be our "Rose."

(*Rose smiles as they sing; then sinks wearily into the armchair, right down stage, and is surrounded at once by solicitous debutantes arranging pillows, footstools, etc.*)

MARY (*Consulting note-book and then speaking*)—

Here are your appointments,
All for today:
Newspaper reporters first
From the "See and Say."
Miss Talkalot, the suffragette,
Who wants you to want to vote,
And Mrs. Doingood, who hopes
That you on charity dote;
The dressmaker, the milliner,
And your perfume-maker,
The man who sells the collie-dogs,
The laundress and the baker,
The coach for the play,
The . . . . . .

ROSE (*Despairingly and lifting her hands as she interrupts*)—

Oh please—oh pray!
That's enough—too much, for today.

MARY—Well, the reporters are here now; are you ready for them?

ROSE (*Resignedly*)—Yes, have them in; one may as well begin.

(*Mary goes off stage, and while she is gone, the maids are heard softly singing off stage.*)

MAIDS—

Yes, we love her and adore her,
To be gay we would implore her.
She's the dearest flower that grows,
And she'll always be our "Rose."

(*Re-enter Mary with the reporters. The latter are dressed in plain shirt waists and skirts and wear sailor hats and eye-glasses. They carry huge note-books, and hold their pencils poised over them in a most business-like manner, jotting down notes as they talk. Mary and the debutantes take positions on left of stage as the reporters come right down stage to Rose.*)

MISS PUTEMDOWN—

Good-morning, how-de-do?

MISS WRITEMUP—

We've come for an interview.

ROSE (*Bowing*)—

I'll do my best for you.

7. INTERVIEW SONG

REPORTERS AND CHORUS—

MISS PUTEMDOWN—

Don't bother to answer our questions
You needn't say even a word;
The public believes what we tell it
As long as it's not too absurd.

MISS WRITEMUP—

So just save your breath while we're talking,
Our story's all planned out by now
It's really quite futile to answer,
We will write what we please, anyhow.

CHORUS—

So just save your breath while they're talking, etc.

(*At the close of this song, the reporters rapidly question Rose, giving her no time to answer, but writing furiously all the time.*)

MISS PUTEMDOWN—
Did you attend the Masked Ball last night?

MISS WRITEMUP—
And was your costume colored or white?

ROSE—
I—(*she is interrupted*).

MISS P.—
Who was your partner for the supper dance?

MISS W.—
Did Madame Cary do the "Pony Prance"?

ROSE—
Why—(*at once she is interrupted*).

MISS P.—
Is the report of your engagement true?

MISS W.—
Who is the man who wrote the book to you?

ROSE—
Really—(*reporters interrupt*).

MISS P.—
What part did you have in the Stage Club Play?

MISS W.—
Do you intend to go abroad again this May?

ROSE—
I—(*more interruptions*)

MISS P.—
Now may we have a photograph of you?

MISS W.—
And thanks for the satisfying interview.

(*They go away from Rose still scribbling frantically, and join the group at left of stage, apparently to take notes from them during this next scene. Almost before they stop talking, Bobbie appears at the door and announces new arrivals.*)

BOBBIE—
Mrs. Doingood and Miss Talkalot.

(*Enter Mrs. Doingood and Miss Talkalot, and exit Bobbie after making faces at the backs of the two new arrivals. Mrs. Doingood is rather elaborately dressed, and has numerous chains, bags, scarfs, etc. dangling from her ample person. Miss Talkalot is very smartly and mannishly dressed, and affects a masculine manner, which obviously annoys Mrs. Doingood. They approach Rose, who rises to greet them.*)

8. CHARITY VS. SUFFRAGE.

MRS. DOINGOOD AND MISS TALKALOT—

MRS. DOINGOOD (*Very sweetly*)—

1. Dear Miss McCloud, I will not take
Much of your precious time;
For people to annoy you so,
It surely is a crime. (*Glares at Miss T.*)

MISS TALKALOT—

1. I only brought a circular,
"Why Women Need the Vote,"
If anyone talks less than that,
Well, I am here to note!

MRS. DOINGOOD—

2. My life vocation's charity;
I'm founding now a place
Whose benefits I can explain
In, say, five minutes' space.

MISS TALKALOT—

2. I'll prove why women all should vote,
If we are to progress;
And why this old world, ruled by men,
Is just an awful mess.

(*Mrs. Doingood and Miss Talkalot glare furiously at each other, and Rose hastens to speak.*)

ROSE—Oh, I'm sure, my dear ladies, that you both represent very good causes, and I'll be glad to give you both checks to help on your good work.

(*The strained atmosphere relaxes.*)

MRS. DOINGOOD (*Gushing*)—Oh, thank you a thousand times!

MISS TALKALOT (*Briefly*)—Much obliged, I'm sure.

(*They go over to the other group arm-in-arm, as Madame Sewseams enters, followed by six maids bearing gowns of different shades of pink and rose, pins, tape measures, patterns, etc., etc. Madame Feathertop comes next, followed by five maids carrying rose-trimmed hats and other hats in boxes gaily decorated with roses. After them eomes Madame Smellsweet, followed by a maid with her arms filled with perfume bottles, rose satchets, etc. Mrs. Fussy enters last. All group themselves about Rose, who is in center of stage. The costumes of the three new arrivals are modish and rather elaborate.*)

MME. SEWSEAMS (*Speaking with a gesture toward gowns*)—

Voila, Mees Rosie,
Ze tres gorgeous gown,
All ready for fitting today.

MME. FEATHERTOP (*Showing hat*)—

And do see, my dear Miss,
This lovely rose crown.
Come, now, try it on, I pray.

ROSE (*Turning petulantly away*)—

I am weary of Dame Fashion
Paris hats are not my passion;
What can the matter be?

MME. SMELLSWEET (*Stepping up to Rose and offering open bottle of perfume.*)

Just take a sniff,
A wee little whiff,
And in a jiff
Sorrow goes!
This perfume's a joy,
An expensive toy,
For which we employ
The wild rose!

ROSE (*Musing*)—

"The Wild Rose!" I like that name,
For a hothouse rose is tame.

9. "I'M SO TIRED OF ALL THIS LIFE."

ROSE AND CHORUS—

ROSE—

1. I'm so tired of all this life,
So much worthless fuss and strife;
So what would you say
If I've found a way
To escape and live as I please?

CHORUS—

We'll be glad and gay
If you've found a way
To escape and live as you please!

ROSE—

2. Good friends all, I'll tell you true
What it is I want to do.
You know Lady Grey?
She's written a play,
And I've asked for the leading rôle.

CHORUS—

We hope Lady Grey
Will grant in her play
Your request for the leading rôle.

MARY—My goodness, Rose, whatever put that idea into your head?

ROSE—I don't know, really. I've always enjoyed our amateur theatricals in society affairs, and I've been quite successful in them—at least, so I've been told.

MOLLY—Oh, yes, Rose, you were always wonderful!

DORA—Indeed you were—adorable!

MISS WRITEMUP (*Taking notes*)—Did you really ask Lady Grey for the rôle in her play?

ROSE—Yes, I wrote to her, asking for an interview, and sent her the newspaper reports of my work in amateur theatricals.

MARY—And you've not heard from her yet?

ROSE—No, but a letter is due almost any time now. I do hope she lets me have that part. I want to do it more than anything else in the world.

(*A shrill whistle is heard off stage; the girls jump and scream nervously. Enter Bobbie, with a postman's cap on his head, a postman's whistle in his mouth, and his arms piled full to overflowing with mail, which spills as he walks. He advances to center front, singing as he comes.*)

10. "IT'S ONLY ME."

BOBBIE AND CHORUS—

BOBBIE—

1. It's only me,
Orter be three!
If I gotter haul this mail.
I hold it tight
With all my might,
But of mail I leave a trail!
(*He blows two loud blasts on his whistle*).

CHORUS—

Goodness, gracious,
Mail so spacious,
Boy audacious,
Quite pugnacious.
(*An ominous meowing is heard outside.*)

BOBBIE—

2. Oh murder, gee!
The cat, that's she,
For when I passed with this mail,
She took a fright
And tried to bite,
So the door, it pinched her tail!
(*He blows a blast on his whistle, and looks very innocent.*)

CHORUS—

Goodness, gracious,
Mail so spacious,
Boy audacious,
Quite pugnacious!

MRS. FUSSY (*Hastening to the door and picking up the cat, which she hands to Rose*)—Poor little dear, come here, come here.

ROSE (*Taking the cat*)—Pussy, pussy, now would you try
To read those letters, if you were I?
(*To Bobbie*)—Put them on the table, or if there are more
Than will go there safely, put them on the floor!

(*Bobbie puts the mail down on a large table in center stage.*)

(*Mary looks through the letters as Bobbie puts them on table, and speaks.*)

(*Rose gives the cat to Bobbie, who assists it to make an exit.*)

MARY—But your letter from Lady Grey?

ROSE (*Excitedly helping her*)—That's true, it may be here today.

MARY (*Taking up letter*)—This must be it; here is her crest.

ROSE (*Nervously*)—You read it first; that will be best.

MARY (*Opening letter*)—She says—(*pausing*) oh dear!

ALL—Let's hear, let's hear!

ROSE (*Taking letter and reading aloud*)—

"Dear Miss McCloud:—

I must refuse
To grant the boon you ask.
I'm getting on in years, and find
These interviews a task
Beyond my strength. My play
Demands an actress of great skill,
And much less frivolous than you——"

(*She stops reading, and flings letter to the floor.*)

Oh, what a bitter disappointment! I had hoped that that chance might take me away from this artificial life.

11. "I WANT TO BE LOVED FOR MYSELF ALONE."

ROSE AND CHORUS—

ROSE—

1. I want to be loved for myself alone,
And not for my fortune's fame.
I wish I could live in a foreign land,
Where no one would know my name.
I'm not really frivolous—not at all!
In spite of what people say.
I hate the false glamour about my life,
Both when I'm at work and at play.

CHORUS—

She's tired of the whirl of the city,
Its endless excitement cloys;
She's wearied of haste and confusion,
And longs for some simpler joys.

ROSE—

2. I want to be loved for myself alone,
I'm tired of the glittering past,
The compliments sweet and quite insincere;
I want something real at last.
I'm tired of the treadmill of city life,
Its endless excitement cloys;
I'm weary of haste and confusion wild,
And long for some simpler joys.

CHORUS—

She's tired of the whirl of the city, etc.

MARY—If you feel that way, Rose, why don't you go to the country for a rest! You could buy a nice little farm.

MRS. FUSSY (*Importantly*)—Ahem! Yes, certainly, a nice little farm!

BOBBIE (*Mimicking her*)—A little farm!

(*Mrs. Fussy makes a dive for Bobbie, but he successfully dodges.*)

ROSE (*Thoughtfully*)—I believe I will do that. Yes, (*decidedly*)

I'm going to leave this mad city whirl,
And live on a farm—just a plain country girl.

MARY—

But your name?

ROSE—

That I'll change.

MRS. FUSSY—

And this House?

ROSE—

We'll arrange.

DEBUTANTES—

Invitations?

DRESSMAKER—

Alterations?

ROSE—

I don't know and I don't care!

MISS WRITEMUP—

Where's the farm?

ROSE (*Warily*)—

I'll not say.

MISS TALKALOT—

Votes for women?

ROSE—

Not today.

MILLINER—

But your hats?

BOBBIE (*Serio-comic tone*)—

And the cats?

ROSE—

Without them to live I'll dare.

12. FINALE—ACT I.

PRINCIPALS AND CHORUS—

ROSE—

Yes, I'm going to leave,
This mad city whirl,
Living in touch with all that is charming
Like a rustic girl.
Yes, I'm going to leave
All this rush and whirl,
Living in beauty,
Doing my duty,
Just a rustic girl.

CHORUS—

Yes, she's going to leave,
All this rush and whirl,
Living in beauty,
Doing her duty,
Just a rustic girl.

DEBUTANTES—

Then let us come
To live with thee;
Country lasses
We fain would be.
For we are debutantes so gay,
With joy and with spirit we bring
The gifts that our hearts give away
To our Rose, our queen, we sing.

CHORUS—

So let them come
To live with thee;
Country lasses
They fain would be.

MAIDS—

And we love her and adore her,
So to take us we'd implore her.
She's the dearest, dearest flow'r that grows,
And she'll always be our "Rose."

CHORUS—

She's the dearest, dearest flow'r that grows,
And she'll always be our "Rose."

BOBBIE—

Oh murder, gee!
Say, please take me,
For who would carry your mail?
I promise you,
If this you'll do,
I won't pinch the darn cat's tail.

CHORUS—

Goodness, gracious,
Mail so spacious,
Boy audacious,
Quite pugnacious.

ROSE—

Now what would you say
If I've found a way
To escape and live as I please?

CHORUS—

We'll be glad and gay
If you've found a way
To escape and live as you please.

ROSE WITH CHORUS—

Yes, she's (I'm) going to leave
All this rush and whirl,
Living in beauty,
Doing her (my) duty,
Just a rustic girl.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

The curtain rises, disclosing a garden on Rose McCloud's country estate. Roses bloom abundantly everywhere. Toward the back of stage runs a low stone wall, with a rustic gateway at center back. Rose vines clamber over this wall, and trail over the supports of the gate. This wall marks the boundary of Rose's estate, and the land on the other side belongs to Lady Grey. From the gateway to the center front of stage is one path, and another running across the stage from entrances right and left intersects it at right angles.

At the right, down stage, is a rustic garden bench with a rose-decked garden hat hanging from a corner of it.

An open space of lawn at the front of stage is reserved for choruses and dance as indicated. The drop indicates a stretch of open country.

The twelve maids enter as the curtain rises. They wear pink gingham or chambray smocks, rather short, white stockings and black slippers with flat heels. Their hair hangs loose, and they wear pink sunbonnets to match their smocks. Three of the maids carry bright tin pails, three have rakes, three watering cans, and three flower baskets and scissors.

The girls with the rakes and flower baskets enter from right (rakes leading), the other six from left (pails leading). They sing as they come along the path.

13. "THE COUNTRY LIFE IS THE LIFE FOR US."

MAIDS—

The country life is the life for us;
We love it, we love it!
There's nothing in all the world that ranks
Above it, above it.

(They take their places in center of stage, and sing the following lines.)

We rake the hay
All the live-long day,
We're glad and gay,
Laughing care away.

We are milk-maids
Bright and fair,
Breathing the purest,
Loveliest air.

In bud and leaf
We find relief
For every sordid
Care and grief.

In pearly dew
And luscious rain
That feed and grow
The golden grain.

There's nothing in all the world that ranks
Above it, above it.
The country life is the life for us,
We love it, we love it!

(*During this chorus, each set of girls goes through the motions of raking, watering, etc., etc. As they sing, they all move left until they are left of center. During their last line, Rose enters from the right. She skips along the path to center stage. She wears a simple dress of very pale pink. Her hair is hanging loose, and in it she has woven a dainty crown of wild roses. Her arms are full of wild roses, and she continues to hold them during her song.*)

ROSE—Good morning, girls! See what I found. (*Holding up roses.*) Aren't they lovely?

1ST MAID—Just like yourself, Miss Rose.

2ND MAID—Yes, you are a regular wild rose.

ROSE (*Laughing*)—Why, so I am a wild Rose now—shall I tell you why?

(*The girls cluster about her—six on either side—as she sings this next.*)

14. "I'M A WILD ROSE."

ROSE AND MAIDS—

ROSE—

1. I'm a wild Rose,
I'm a free Rose,
Just as I used to be in dreams.
Go as I please,
No one to tease;
Nobody knows how good it seems.

MAIDS—

Go as I please, etc.

ROSE—

2. I am care free,
I can fare free.
Out in the fields and meadows gay.
Up with the lark,
To bed at dark,
Wafted to dreamland far away.

MAIDS—

Up with the lark, etc. *Dance*—ad libitum

1ST MAID—And are you really as happy as that, Miss Rose?

ROSE (*Throwing out her arms impulsively*)—Oh! isn't everybody happy in this wonderful place?

BOBBIE (*Entering hastily from left and glancing apprehensively over his shoulder, as if fearful of being chased, hears the last remark, and responds vehemently.*)—Naw! (*He is dressed to look like a little farmer; wears overalls, a bandanna kerchief about his neck, and a wide straw hat on his head.*)

ROSE (*Surprised*)—Why, Bobbie, what do you mean? Aren't you happy here?

BOBBIE—Naw!

ROSE—What's the matter?

BOBBIE (*Darkly*)—The old woman!

ROSE—Old woman?

2ND MAID—He means Mrs. Fussy.

BOBBIE—Yeh, that's her. (*Sings.*)

15. "SHE'S GOT AN AWFUL CASE ON ME."

BOBBIE AND MAIDS—

BOBBIE—

1. She's got an awful case on me,
I'm just as peeved as I can be.
Wisht I could be an orphan waif,
For every time I think I'm safe,
Then the duckie will appear.
Surely, she is very near,
Gee, O gee! some day, I fear
That she'll come and call me "dear."

BOBBIE AND MAIDS—

Then the duckie will appear, etc.

(*General laughter at Bobbie's expense.*)

BOBBIE—

2. Say! it is fierce to be a man,
When you're the only one who can
Be such a pet for the old duck
Sometimes I think my job I'll chuck.
Then the duckie will appear,
Surely she is very near,
Gee, O gee! some day, I fear
That she'll come and call me "dear."

BOBBIE AND MAIDS—

Then the duckie will appear, etc.

(*Exeunt maids and Rose left, dancing off to the music of the last chorus, and pointing as they go to Mrs. Fussy, who enters right. Bobbie sees her too late to make his escape, looks wildly around, and then succumbs to the inevitable. Mrs. Fussy is dressed in calico, with a gingham apron and sunbonnet, built for service, not beauty. She still carries the huge bunch of keys. During this scene, she and Bobbie are in perpetual motion, he fleeing from her advances.*)

BOBBIE (*Despairingly rolling his eyes and putting one hand on the pit of his stomach.*)—Gosh! it's all over.

MRS. FUSSY (*Waddling toward him with a fond grimace.*)—What's all over? Have you finished your chores?

BOBBIE (*retreating*)—Yep! ye-yes, ma'am.

MRS. FUSSY (*Following*)—That's fine. You're a real good boy, Bobbie, aren't you?

BOBBIE (*Much embarrassed, standing on one foot, and then on the other*)—Nope! that is—yes, ma'am.

MRS. FUSSY—Of course you are, and I've planned such a nice treat for you.

BOBBIE (*Hopefully, with rising inflection*)—Yeh?

(*He stays his pace a bit, and allows Mrs. Fussy to almost catch him before the next remark.*)

MRS. FUSSY (*Nearing Bobbie, and beaming upon him*)—Yes, I'm going to take you with me to town this afternoon when I go in shopping. Just we two (*killing glance at the half-fainting youth*). Won't that be nice, Bobbie, *dear?*

BOBBIE (*Throwing up his hands in holy horror*)—Oh, *good* night!

(*Chorus off stage, Bobbie and Mrs. Fussy*)—

Then the duckie will appear,
Surely she (I am) is very near,
Gee, O gee! some day, I fear
That she'll (I'll) come and call me (him) "dear."

(*While this is being sung, Bobbie and Mrs. Fussy make their exit right to fancy steps; Mrs. Fussy still in pursuit of the fleeing Bobbie. Rose is heard calling off stage.*)

ROSE (*Calling*)—Here, kitty, kitty, kitty! Here, pussy!

(*She enters from left, followed by the maids, all searching for the cat, and calling, "Kitty, kitty" until they get well on stage. Then Rose sings:*)

16. "PUSSY, PUSSY."

ROSE AND MAIDS—

ROSE—

1. Pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy,
You're such a naughty cat;
Why must you be a rover?
Oh, where can you be at?

Pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy,
Why can't you stay at home,
And count your blessings over,
Why must you ever roam?

ROSE AND MAIDS (*Dancing gaily in different directions, and looking for the cat as they sing:*)

Then it's
Kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty,
Kitty all over the place;
Oh, it's
Pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty,
Pretty the way we must chase!

ROSE—

2. Pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy,
You're such a naughty cat,
Why will you try to scare me?
Come get a nice fat rat!

Pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy,
If you still stay away.
Then you had best beware me,
Give heed to what I say!

ROSE AND MAIDS—

Then it's
Pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy, etc.

(*Exeunt left to the music—all but Rose, who remains on stage, coming down right, to the rustic bench. She absently takes her hat from the corner of the bench, and then sits down, swinging the hat by the strings.*)

ROSE—Now, where in the world can that cat have gone this time?

(*She hums a bit, then sings softly*:)

Then it's
Kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty, etc.

(*As she sings, Lady Grey enters the stage back of the stone wall, and walks slowly along it from the left until she comes to the gate, which she opens and passes through to Rose's garden. She is dressed in soft grey, with a white lace kerchief arranged Quaker-wise, and a white lace cap. Her hair is white, she wears spectacles, and walks slowly with the aid of a cane. She carries the missing cat. Rose is sitting with her back toward Lady Grey, so does not notice her entrance. She rises and speaks*:)

ROSE—*Where* do you suppose that cat is?

LADY GREY (*Directly back of Rose*)—Not far away.

ROSE (*Jumping and turning quickly*)—Goodness, how you startled me! Why, why (*going forward with outstretched hands*), it's my nice little neighbor who lives next door!

LADY GREY (*Smiling*)—And who found your cat!

ROSE (*Takes the cat, and seats Lady Grey on the bench*)—This is very kind of you; please be seated, and we can have a nice talk. But first let me call my faithful maids, who are doubtless still hunting for the runaway. (*Raising her hands to her mouth, and calling*):

Don't hunt any more around!
Kitty's home safe—kitty's found!

(*Enter maids from left, and Bobbie and Mrs. Fussy from right. They form a group to the left of Lady Grey and Rose.*)

ROSE (*To maids, etc.*)—

Our kind neighbor-from-over-the-wall just came,
And brought back the pussy of runaway fame.
(*To Lady Grey*):
I can't introduce you; I don't know your name.

LADY GREY—Lady Grey.

ALL (*With excitement*)—Lady Grey!

A MAID—Of playwriting fame?

LADY GREY—Yes.

BOBBIE (*Suddenly waking up to the situation.*)—Lady Grey who writes plays! Why, then she's the dame——

ROSE—Bobbie! (*Makes signs to all not to reveal her identity, and continues.*)—Bobbie, you're very rude! Really, I shall have to punish you.

BOBBIE (*Resignedly*)—All right, Miss Rose. (*An idea suddenly strikes him, and he continues eagerly*). Say, let me stay home and mind the cat, and miss my treat for this afternoon.

ROSE (*Suspiciously*)—What was it to be?

BOBBIE (*Rolling his eyes in mock rapture*)—A lovely trip to town with Mrs. Fussy!

ROSE (*Eyes twinkling*)—So that's it! On second thought! I've decided to let you go, Bobbie. It would be too cruel to deprive you of that (*mimicking his exaggerated tone*) lovely time!

BOBBIE (*With despairing howl*)—Ah, now, Miss Rose! When things gets too bad, I runs away.

ROSE—Dear me, Bobbie, what a horrible threat! We won't force you to carry it out. I've changed my mind again, and you may stay at home for punishment.

BOBBIE (*In great relief*)—Oh, thank you, Miss Rose!

ROSE (*Wickedly*)—What are you thanking me for? For punishing you? Take the cat.

(*Bobbie subsides in sudden confusion after taking the cat, and avoids the baleful eyes of Mrs. Fussy. Rose turns to Lady Grey and speaks.*)

ROSE—You see my household keeps me busy.

LADY GREY—I see it does, my dear. Do you know, I don't know *your* name either. Of course, I just heard them call you Rose, but Rose what?

ROSE (*Stammering a bit*)—Why, Rose—er—Rose Wild! (*As a sudden idea comes to her.*)

BOBBIE (*Chuckling*)—Oh yeh; she's Rose Wild and I'm Rose Bug, and she (*pointing to where Mary now enters from the left*) is Rose-Mary! (*He is withered by a look from Rose.*)

LADY GREY—Rose Wild! What a charming name, and I'm sure it quite fits you, my dear.

(*Mary, who has entered from left and now comes up to Rose, is dressed simply in white, and carries an opened telegram, which she holds out as she speaks.*)

MARY—Oh Rose, what do you think? A telegram from your city friends, announcing that they have left for here in automobiles, and are due to arrive shortly.

ROSE—Good gracious! they can't come now! (*Looking apprehensively at Lady Grey.*) They'll spoil everything. Oh, I forgot (*bringing Mary to Lady Grey*). Lady Grey, my friend Mary Forsythe.

BOBBIE (*Under his breath*)—Rose Mary! Ha!

LADY GREY—I'm glad to meet you all face to face. I've often admired you from a distance. You seem to enjoy the country life so much.

MARY—Yes, we love it.

A MAID—The country life is the life for us;
We love it.
There's nothing in all the world that ranks
Above it.

LADY GREY—How lovely! Yes, it's plain to be seen that you are all real country people. So simple, and not a bit frivolous or spoiled.

ROSE (*Eagerly*)—Oh, do you really think that?

LADY GREY—Indeed I do.

(*Automobile horns sound loudly off stage; general consternation as laughter and voices are heard drawing nearer. Enter from left the debutantes, the dressmaker, the milliner, the perfumer, the suffrage worker, the charity worker, the reporters, and other city people, if desired. They all wear more or less elaborate or tailored city costumes, with motor veils and motor coats, which they carry over their arms.*)

DEBUTANTES (*Rushing forward to Rose*)—Oh Rose, we're so glad to see you! We've missed you terribly!

ROSE (*Smiling*)—Have you?

MOLLY—Have we? Listen.

17. "WE'VE MISSED YOU SO."

DEBUTANTES AND CHORUS—

FLORA AND DORA—

1. When the morning dawned so brightly,
And the sun was shining fair,
Still we missed the morning's glory,
For we knew you were not there.

We've hunted high,
We've hunted low;
We're glad you're found,
We've missed you so!

CHORUS—

We've hunted high, etc.

MOLLY AND POLLY—

2. When the noon, in radiance glowing,
Beckoned us to joy and fun,
And the laughter pealed so merry,
Still we missed you, dearest one.
We've hunted high, etc.

CHORUS—

We've hunted high, etc.

THE FOUR DEBUTANTES—

3. When the moon was softly shining
And the earth was wet with dew,
Then our thoughts far off went roaming,
Roaming far off, dear, to you.
We've hunted high, etc.

CHORUS—

We've hunted high, etc.

ROSE—Have you really missed me like that? That was lovely of you. But I'm forgetting my manners. Lady Grey, let me introduce some of my city friends.

POLLY (*Almost shrieking*)—Lady Grey? Why Rose McCloud!

BOBBIE (*To cat*)—Now pussy, you're out of the bag, all right, all right!

LADY GREY (*Rising*)—Pardon me, did you say Rose McCloud?

POLLY—Of course; that's her name.

LADY GREY (*Turning to Rose*)—I thought you said your name was Wild.

ROSE (*Confused*)—Well, you see it's this way. I didn't know who you were at first, and then when I did, I just wanted you to know me a little better as a country girl before you condemned me as "that frivolous Rose McCloud"—on account of the play, you know.

LADY GREY—Yes, I'm just coming to that play. I was on the point of asking you to try the leading rôle in my new play when your loyal city friends arrived and gave you away. Now—(*pauses*)—

ROSE (*Fearfully*)—Now, I suppose, knowing who I am, you've changed your mind (*She looks down in disappointment almost childish.*)

LADY GREY (*Going to her and putting hand on her arm*)—Now, I am more than ever convinced that you are a clever little actress, and can do it well. There's one other person here that I'd like to work in that play, and that is———

ALL (*Eagerly*)—Yes, yes?

LADY GREY (*Smiling and pointing out Bobbie with her stick*)—Master Rose Bug!

BOBBIE—Hully Gee! Ain't that grand! (*To Mrs. Fussy, with patronizing air*). Make the most of me now, dearie, you won't have me long.

MISS WRITEUP (*Advancing, eternal pencil poised over everlasting pad*)—Really this is most interesting.

MISS PUTEMDOWN (*Also advancing to Rose*)—Just a few notes on this, please.

18. SCOOP SONG.

REPORTERS AND CHORUS—

REPORTERS—

1. Beauteous maiden
On a farm.
Famous playwright
She doth charm.
Girl is not with-
Out some fame—
Has a well-known
City name.

Watch us write our little scoop.
How bright thoughts to us troop;
How our brains just loop the loop,
How to truth we need not stoop.

CHORUS—

Watch them write their little scoop, etc.

REPORTERS—

2. Romance, scented!
Here's the truth;
There is said to
Be a youth
In the case, who
Also goes
On the stage to
Be with "Rose"!
Watch us write our little scoop, etc.

ALL—

Watch us (them) write our little scoop.
See how ideas to us (them) troop;
How our (their) brains just loop the loop.
How to truth we (they) need not stoop.

ROSE (*Laughing*)—That's splendid! Just as accurate a newspaper report as I ever heard.

DORA—Then you'll come back to us, Rose, when the play begins?

ROSE—Oh yes, I'm coming back, but only for the winters. Every summer I'm coming out to the country to be a "wild Rose" again.

19. FINALE—ACT II.

PRINCIPALS AND CHORUS—

ROSE—

I'm a wild Rose,
I'm a free Rose,
Just as I used to be in dreams,
Go as I please,
No one to tease,
Nobody knows how good it seems.

ALL—

She's a wild Rose, etc.

MAIDS—

The country life is the life for us;
We love it, we love it!
There's nothing in all the world that ranks
Above it, above it.

We rake the hay all the livelong day,
We're glad and gay, laughing care away.
We are the milkmaids, bright and fair,
Breathing the purest, loveliest air.

CITY PEOPLE—

We've hunted high,
We've hunted low;
We're glad you're found
We've missed you so.

BOBBIE—

Say, it's just great to be a man
When you're the only one who can
Be such a pet for playwrights fine
How would you like this job of mine?

ALL—

Say, it's great to be a man, etc.

REPORTERS—

Beauteous maiden's name is Rose,
Sweeter, fairer, no one knows,
Like a flower, so she grows.
All must love her,
Sweet Wild Rose.

CHORUS—

Beauteous maiden's name is Rose, etc.

CURTAIN.

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